

Outdoor Warning Sirens FAQ

- 1. What are the outdoor warning sirens used for?** To alert the public of a severe weather threat. Threats generally include tornado and severe weather warnings, hail over 1.25 inches and straight-line winds 70 mph or higher. The primary function of the sirens is to notify people outside of an imminent weather threat. The criterion for utilization depends on the storm track. Depending on your proximity to a siren location, it may be heard indoors; however, the system is not intended for that specific purpose.
- 2. Where will I hear the outdoor warning siren?** Outdoor warning sirens are designed to be heard and alert people outdoors to go indoors and receive weather updates from local media. Outdoor sirens can be heard for approximately 1 mile in each direction. However, rain, wind and hail and other factors may affect your ability to hear the sirens.
- 3. What does it mean when I hear the outdoor warning siren and what should I do?** Your safety may be at risk from a life-threatening event in progress. Seek shelter indoors and tune to local media, news apps or a weather radio for more information. It is best to shelter in place.
- 4. Does hearing the outdoor warning siren mean I am in imminent danger?** Outdoor warning sirens are often sounded for citywide severe weather warnings and not storm-specific warnings. The safest approach is to be proactive and utilize all information outlets available to determine whether taking immediate shelter should be your next step.
- 5. Are the outdoor warning sirens sounded only for tornados?** No, the outdoor warning sirens are also used for other severe weather-related events that pose a direct risk to the lives of people who are outdoors.



- 6. How do I keep up-to-date with severe weather warnings (tornado, hail, wind, etc.)?** Outdoor warning sirens should not be the only way to keep up to date when a severe weather system approaches. The safest way to stay informed is to layer the information from numerous places and make an educated decision. You can use NOAA weather radios, local television and radio stations, news apps, and social media from local emergency management or county pages.
- 7. Why can't I hear outdoor warning sirens in my house?** A widespread misconception is that you will be able to hear the outdoor warning sirens inside your home. They are designed, however, to alert those *outdoors* of a severe weather threat approaching. If you live near a siren, chances are you may hear it when indoors.
- 8. Who activates the outdoor warning siren?** Outdoor warning sirens are activated by public safety personnel for the City of The Colony.
- 9. When are the outdoor warning sirens tested?** Outdoor warning sirens are tested at noon on the first Wednesday each month, weather permitting.
- 10. Are the outdoor warning sirens the only alert necessary to be weather aware during severe storms?** No, the most efficient way to stay prepared and informed is to gather information from multiple outlets. Local television and radio stations will cover the ongoing storms, social media pages for emergency management or the county will post updates, and NOAA weather radios are also a great resource.
- 11. Where can I find more information?** The following links provide information regarding severe weather preparedness as well as updates during severe weather events:
- [The City of The Colony Emergency Management page](#)
 - [The City of The Colony Facebook page](#)
 - [The City of The Colony Twitter account](#)
 - [National Weather Service-Fort Worth Office](#)
- 12. I am new to the area and I don't have a basement, where do I take shelter?** The safest tornado shelter is on the lowest floor in a windowless room that is the most centralized in the house/apartment away from windows and doors. For example, the under-staircase closet or bathroom. It is always recommended to shelter in place.
- 13. How long is the outdoor warning siren activated?** The sirens are activated for a 3-minute rotation to alert those outdoors there are severe weather-related risks approaching.

- 14. Do the outdoor warning sirens sound an all-clear signal?** No, the sirens are only activated for the severe weather hazard. There is not an all-clear signal sounded afterwards.
- 15. Will the outdoor warning sirens sound if the power fails?** Yes, the outdoor warning sirens have backup batteries to ensure functionality during a power outage.
- 16. How do the outdoor warning sirens work?** The Emergency Management Team assesses the severe weather situation and activates the siren if there are hazards threatening the safety of people outside. Once the sirens are activated, they will sound for a 3-minute rotation. Once the outdoor warning sirens have been activated for the 3-minute rotation, they stop. If you hear sirens, you should move indoors and monitor the weather for updates on the situation.

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